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ARGENTINA: Right-Wing Activity

Rightist repression by Argentine police and security services is reportedly an integral part of the government's overall counterinsurgency effort. Earlier, it had appeared that abuses had been caused by over-zealous security officials operating independent of the government.

all security and military services are involved and are cooperating more effectively now than before. Leftist terrorists are the principal targets, but countersubversive units also operate against leftist sympathizers and others who might give aid to the terrorists. President Videla and other senior military officers apparently condone these activities. Not all authorized operations are legal, however, even under the broad state of siege provisions in force, but senior officers believe reining in those involved would dangerously disrupt the success of the counterinsurgency effort.

even the nonofficial rightist groups now operating in the country belong to authorized counterinsurgency units and have a "clearly approved mission from higher authority." all counterinsurgency efforts by the federal police have approval from higher authority and that no records are kept on detained individuals.

The killing in August of 30 suspected subversives and the subsequent public display of their bodies was reportedly approved by the commanding general of the Buenos Aires regional army corps, the chief of the federal police, and the police force's top security officer. President Videla was said to be disturbed not so much by the killing of the supposed subversives, but by the publicity it was given.

Advocates of such harsh tactics view the success the security forces have had against the left in recent months as justification for their methods. The hard-liners will probably take the apparent terrorist attempt to assassinate Videla last weekend as proof of the need for still more strong measures.

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